

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Doris Fischer

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library  
*People of Faith* Oral History project

Interview # PF-A-L-2016-014

Doris Fischer, a long-time member of Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church in Springfield, Illinois, was interviewed on the dates listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *People of Faith* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: Mar 11 & 18, 2016 Location: Fischer home in Springfield, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Mark R. DePue

Transcription by: \_\_\_\_\_

Edited by: \_\_\_\_\_

Transcript  
being processed

Total Pages: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Time: 1:33 + 1:16 / 1.55 + 1.27 = 2.82 hrs.

Session 1: Doris's early life, and history of Faith Lutheran through mid-1970s

Session 2: Pastor Witkop's and Pastor VanderKloot's tenure at Faith until blending

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on June 28, 2016.

The interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in  
Springfield, Illinois.

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# Abstract

## Doris Fischer, *People of Faith*, PF-A-L-2016-014

**Biographical Information Overview of Interview:** Doris Schuessler (Fischer) was born in June, 1922 in the small town of Bluffs, Illinois, and grew up there during the Great Depression. Her family attended Bluff Lutheran Church, and she attended public schools there, graduating from high school in 1940. She moved to Springfield, Illinois during the war, and in 1946 she married Harold Fischer, a soldier with whom she had corresponded during the war. The couple remained in Springfield, and Doris worked for the Illinois State Police for over thirty years, then volunteered for the State Police for many years after that. Shortly after their marriage, the Fischers joined Faith Lutheran Church, which was founded in 1946 by the Augustana Synod of the Lutheran Church.

The main focus of this interview is on Faith Lutheran Church, and its history from its founding in 1946 to 2015, when it consolidated with Atonement Lutheran Church and Luther Memorial, also Springfield based Evangelical Lutheran Church in America congregations, to form a new congregation, Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church. Doris and Harold were active members of Faith for most of the congregation's history. Doris speaks extensively about Pastor Wellington P. Witkop, who served as the minister for Faith from 1956 to 1989, and Pastor Glen VanderKloot, who served as minister from 1989 until 2015. Doris discussed the various construction phases the growing church experienced in the 1950s through the 1970s, and the gradual decline in membership in the 1990s and 2000s. She also traced the evolution of Lutheranism in American, from the Augustana Synod to the Lutheran Church in America and in 1988 to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** Faith Lutheran Church; Pastor Wellington P. Witkop; Pastor Glen VanderKloot; blending process with Luther Memorial and Atonement Lutheran Church; Bluffs, Illinois; Pastor George Nelson; Pastor Carl E. Leitzke; Harold Fischer; life in depression era Bluffs, Illinois; Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

**Note to the Reader:** Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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